

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side.

KEYSTONE WILL PRODUCE JOBS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the President announced he will veto the payroll tax extension bill passed by House Republicans due to the inclusion of the Keystone pipeline construction. The President campaigns for jobs, but will sadly veto a jobs bill.

This fall, I was fortunate to visit Alberta, Canada, and witnessed firsthand the environmental safeguards to develop Canadian oil sands. The construction of this environmentally advanced pipeline will create at least 120,000 new American jobs without costing taxpayers a dime and will stimulate our economy.

Walter C. Jones in The Augusta Chronicle reports that refined oil products with no pipeline will be denied to South Carolinians at a north Augusta terminal. With a record unemployment rate of over 8 percent for 34 months and over 13 million Americans looking for jobs, it is very sad the President would veto legislation creating jobs.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

PRESERVING UASI CAPABILITY GAINS CAUCUS

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I rise to express my concern about the direction of the Urban Area Security Initiative program.

UASI was created to develop capabilities to prevent and to respond to attacks and catastrophes in our most vulnerable cities. The program has helped develop joint initiatives among local governments in my community of Buffalo-Niagara. We have an obligation to protect this investment and the capability gains developed across the country. Yet recent drastic cuts in the UASI funding have resulted in the elimination of 32 of the 64 urban areas from the program. That puts the preparedness and security capability gains we've achieved at risk.

In order to raise awareness of this problem, this week I formed the Preserving UASI Capability Gains Caucus with Congressman STEVE STIVERS of Columbus, Ohio. I also introduced legislation to preserve the capability gains achieved by communities like Buffalo that were dropped from the UASI program.

I urge my colleagues who represent UASI communities to join our caucus

so that we can protect our capability gains and ensure our communities are properly secured.

THE PEOPLE WORRY ABOUT BIG GOVERNMENT

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, some Americans worry about big labor; others worry about big business. But what really scares most Americans is the massive Federal Government snooping around, meddling and controlling every aspect of people's lives.

According to a Gallup Poll released this week, the overwhelming majority, 64 percent, of those surveyed think that Big Government will be the biggest threat to the country in the future. It's worth noting that about half of those people who participated were Democrats that agreed that Big Government is the problem. No surprise. When I meet with my neighbors in southeast Texas, their message for the Federal Government is clear: back off. Stop saddling expensive, job-killing, and unnecessary regulations on businesses.

The mere phrase, I'm from the Federal Government and I'm here to help you, brings fear and trepidation into the hearts and souls of small business owners and individuals throughout the fruited plain. After all, the Constitution says we the people are to control government, not the other way around. Government should not run roughshod over our personal liberty.

And that's just the way it is.

MIDDLE CLASS TAX RELIEF AND JOB CREATION ACT

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, during this season of giving, when our Nation should be reflecting on the needs of our friends and neighbors who are out of work struggling to provide for their loved ones, this Chamber yesterday voted to cut unemployment benefits for 1 million of our fellow Americans.

The House majority's bill would eliminate several tiers of benefits created under the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program, which has provided up to 99 weeks of support for those who lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

If this legislation becomes law, the maximum potential unemployment benefit will fall by 40 weeks. This legislation would also allow States, many of which are struggling to balance their budgets, to reduce the average weekly amount available to beneficiaries. With over 8 percent unemployment, I'm strongly opposed to any reduction in emergency unemployment insurance.

I am a proud supporter, though, of moving the XL pipeline project forward

and supported it in separate legislation. The XL pipeline makes both energy and economic sense for our country, and I hope the administration will find a way to allow the construction to commence in some States while still revisiting the route in Nebraska.

I urge my colleagues to stand in support of the over 13 million Americans looking for work this holiday season and pass a clean extension of the unemployment insurance program.

KEYSTONE PIPELINE

(Mr. GRAVES of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to give thanks today to my House colleagues, who yesterday, in bipartisan fashion, moved to start construction on the Keystone XL pipeline, because this is truly a shovel-ready project that will provide good jobs and secure energy for Americans.

The Keystone pipeline will create nearly 100,000 private sector jobs once completed—20,000 of those jobs generated just to construct the pipeline, with 50 companies in Georgia benefiting from this. And once it's finished, this pipeline will pump 700,000 gallons of crude oil a day from our friend and neighbor, Canada, a good, reliable, and secure supply of oil.

The environmental impact statements have been completed and the path for the pipeline has been determined. The only thing standing in the way is politics. President Obama has postponed his decision on whether the private sector can build this pipeline until after the next election. If it's good enough after the election, surely it's good enough today.

Good jobs. Secure energy. No cost to the taxpayers. It's a no-brainer.

MAJORITY RISKING TAX CUTS

(Mr. SIRES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the majority unwisely gambled with the economic security of the middle class. They voted on legislation that was designed to fail, fully knowing that it will be dead on arrival in the Senate and vetoed by the President.

By tying the extension of the payroll tax to controversial and unrelated policies, the majority is playing a dangerous game that could result in tax hikes for 160 million workers. Moreover, by attaching the Medicare doc fix to the same divisive policy, they have endangered seniors' access to their doctors.

We must support a clean extension of the payroll tax holiday and the unemployment insurance that is not paid for through increased health care costs for seniors or at the expense of public health. If we fail to pass a clean extension of the payroll tax holiday or unemployment benefits, the average